

TO THE GOVERNMENTS AND NATIONS OF EUROPE

(Original: Aux Gouvernements et Nations de l'Europe)

1871

BY
JOSEPH KARAM

HASBAYA, LEBANON
Al Shihabi Citadel

CHEHAB



CHRONICLES

*Edited and Translated
by Taylan Paksoy
2023*

TO THE GOVERNMENTS AND NATIONS OF EUROPE

(Original: Aux Gouvernements et Nations de l'Europe)

by Joseph Karam

Original Publisher: [s.n.]

Printed in Rome, 1871.

This English translation © 2023 Taylan Paksoy. All Rights Reserved.

Edited and Translated from French by Taylan Paksoy, 2023

This is an original translation of "Aux Gouvernements et Nations de l'Europe" by Joseph Karam. While the original French work from 1871 is in the public domain, this English translation is the intellectual property of Taylan Paksoy.

No part of this translation may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the translator, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. Scholarly use is encouraged, and academics may cite and quote this translation in their research with proper attribution to the translator.

This translation is published as part of the Chehab Chronicles online database:

<https://www.chehabfamily.org/chronicles>

First English Translation, 2023

Editor's Note

During the compilation of materials for the Chehab Chronicles database, the name of Joseph Karam (1823–1889) emerged as a significant figure. As a minor Sheikh from the Ehden-Zghorta region in northern Mount Lebanon, Karam's family connection to the Chehab dynasty was established through his father, who received the title of Sheikh from Emir Bashir II himself.

Karam's actions would prove instrumental during the tumultuous period that culminated in the 1860 massacres across Mount Lebanon and the broader Levant. Following the dissolution of the Shihabi Emirate in 1841, a significant power vacuum emerged in the region's political landscape. In this context, Sheikh Joseph Karam positioned himself as one of several contenders vying for authority, specifically aspiring to establish himself as the preeminent political leader of the Maronite community.

However, Karam's political aspirations encountered substantial resistance. The highest authorities within the Maronite Church withheld their support for his leadership bid. Simultaneously, foreign powers, particularly France, maintained their unwavering support for the restoration of the Chehab dynasty under Emir Majid Chehab, the grandson of Emir Bashir II, effectively circumscribing Karam's political ambitions.

Nevertheless, despite the ultimate futility of his immediate political aspirations, Karam's determined actions and leadership qualities secured him a distinctive place in Lebanese history. Through his willful conduct and political engagement, he emerged as one of the principal figures in the nascent Lebanese national movement, contributing significantly to the early formations of Lebanese national consciousness.

This significant memoir, composed and published during Joseph Karam's second and final exile, serves as an invaluable historical document. The text comprises both his personal recollections of the Lebanese civil conflict and his diplomatic correspondence with European governments and their citizenry. As a historical source, the memoir proves instrumental in elucidating two critical aspects of Lebanese history: first, the profound consequences following the dissolution of Chehab Dynasty's authority, and second, the complex transition from Lebanon's traditional political structure to an increasingly modernized polity.

Karam himself emerges as a quintessential representative of a new generation of Lebanese leadership that materialized in the latter half of the nineteenth century. His autobiographical narrative provides researchers with an exemplary case study in self-representation. Of particular scholarly value is his careful cultivation of distinct personas when addressing different audiences: the local aristocracy, Ottoman administrative authorities, and European diplomatic circles and governments.

Through his written discourse, Karam presents an exceptional lens through which scholars can examine the evolving nature of political leadership and diplomatic relations in this pivotal period of Lebanese history.

Taylan Paksoy

10/04/2023

JOSEPH KARAM

TO THE GOVERNMENTS AND NATIONS OF EUROPE

I.

If I present before the eyes of the governments and nations of Europe the situation of Lebanon, and if I recount the events which I have witnessed or in which I have taken part since 1860, I will not be accused, I hope, of too great boldness. I obey the sentiment of justice, and I appeal to what is most elevated in the political order - dignity, as well as to what is most sacred in the social order - the Rights of Nations.

My memoir concludes with some considerations on the future of the Orient.

II

SITUATION OF LEBANON

The Mediterranean separates Lebanon from Europe and serves as our frontier to the West. On our coasts that belong to us are nevertheless found three enclave cities that no longer depend today on Lebanon; these are: Tripoli towards the north, Beirut at the center, Sayda to the south. In Tripoli and Sayda the inhabitants are majority Muslim; in Beirut they are majority Christian.

Our border, on the southern side, is formed by the districts depending on Sayda, populated largely by Muslims and Metualis, a Muslim sect.

To the East extend the districts of Baalbek and those of Damascus, whose inhabitants are almost all Metualis.

To the North, finally, the two districts of Daniyeh and Akkar, largely Christian, depend on the government of Tripoli.

Lebanon forms a chain of high mountains, running from North to South, quite similar to the Alps. Steep and uncultivated rocks, deep ravines, barely passable, where one finds caves that have always served as refuge for the Christians of Syria during times of persecution, cut through the country whose climate or climates are described by Arab poets. "Lebanon," they say, "carries winter on its head, spring on its shoulders, autumn in its breast, and summer sleeps at its feet along the Mediterranean."

To traverse Lebanon lengthwise takes 35 hours of walking, it takes 8 or 9 hours across its width.

Our main product is silk, but the mulberry trees have suffered a serious disease these years.

In our northern districts the inhabitants are Christian, mixed with some Muslims and Metualis. In those of the South they are Christians and Druze.

The tribes of Lebanon break down as follows:

Tribe	Population
Maronites	350,000
Druze	40,000
Non-united Greeks	25,000
United Greeks	15,000
Metoualis	10,000
Muslims	1,500
Total	441,500

This is therefore a population of nearly half a million souls of which the Maronites account for more than three quarters. Moreover, one very rarely finds Maronites outside of Lebanon.

For many centuries Lebanon formed an autonomous principality, and, from its origin, the government of Islam made a treaty with the Christians, by virtue of which Lebanon had to pay a fixed fee or tax and enjoy complete freedom in choosing its rulers, in its administration and in its worship. Both parties were faithful to this treaty. After the establishment of the Sultans in Constantinople, the Lebanese continued to elect their rulers, Muslim or Christian, whom the Sultans confirmed.

History does not record that the Christians of Lebanon ever attacked neighboring cities and districts; but it shows them often attacked themselves, sometimes defeated and ruined, without losing their autonomy.

At the time of Emir Bechir-Chehab, a Maronite, who built in his palace of Beit-ed-Din a church dedicated to St. Maron, the Lebanese rendered a considerable service to Sultan Abdul-Mejid. The government of the Sublime Porte seized this opportunity to divide the autonomous principality of Lebanon into two kaimacamats, one Maronite, the other Druze, and made us hope for great progress. This happened in 1842.



But the rupture of autonomy could not be progress: tranquility disappeared, religious dissensions arose, and, developing little by little, led to the terrible massacres of 1860.

As much by dignity of themselves as by sentiment of humanity, the five great Powers intervened between the Sublime Porte and Lebanon, and the Lebanese hastened to assure the Commissioners of these Powers that they blindly placed in their hands the care of the future of the country, of its rights, of its privileges, of its autonomy.



Unfortunately, the Constitution placed the country in a more difficult situation. Indeed, to the first division into two kaimacamats, Maronite and Druze, whose disadvantages I have just mentioned, the Constitution substituted a second division which separated each tribe from the other and subjected them all to an employee of the Sublime Porte, to a Christian pasha who took the name of moutsareff, and of whom I will speak shortly. Moreover, the Christians of Lebanon and those of the neighboring cities of Lebanon, who need mutual friendship to support each other against the dangers that ordinarily threaten them, found in the Constitution a source of rivalries unknown until then, because it placed the Lebanese in all encounters under the jurisdiction of the commercial tribunals of non-Lebanese cities. It also followed that the government of Lebanon fell de facto into a humiliating dependence and had to obey the injunctions of the various governments of the cities.

However, despite these serious conditions, the Lebanese kept hope of enjoying peace. They believed that since the Constitution was given to them by the Sultan and approved by the five protecting Powers, they would at least have, in case of necessity, an effective recourse.

Seeing Lebanon placed under the hand of a Christian pasha, a moutsareff, the Powers were also convinced that they were ensuring our fate: they were unaware of the significance of this pasha's title.

“Moutsareff”, in Arabic and Turkish languages, is equivalent to “absolute”, and becomes a contradiction when applied to the governor of a country to which one claims to give a constitution and franchises; for if this governor is “moutsareff” (absolute) he abolishes the constitution, and, conversely, if he respects the constitution he is no longer “moutsareff” and must take a title in harmony with his character and his functions.

Now, to diminish the importance of this title, very considerable in the eyes of those who worship brutal force, as well as to extend absolute power in Syria, they soon invested the governors of Tripoli, Beirut and other cities with this same title. It even happened that a merchant from Beirut, M. Nahoum Kikano, appointed chancellor of the governor of Lebanon, was called moutsareff, so that in a short time all the tribes of Lebanon each had their moutsareff, and from there these tribes entered into rivalry, both because of the fragmentation of autonomy and because of religious differences.

Today the Lebanese have fallen into a servitude that blacks no longer know. Their so-called Christian pasha, supported by the name of the Sultan and the five great Powers, has cut from the Constitution what seemed contrary to his designs and has overburdened us with taxes.

All the solicitations of the Lebanese to this pasha and to the consuls general have been rejected under the pretext presented by him that they were made at the instigation or in favor of a private individual.

It followed that any request for justification being forbidden to a private individual as well as to a people who show sympathy to a private individual, the pasha became free to sacrifice the Lebanese one by one as private individuals, and in general for having loved a private individual, as we have seen so many examples.

III

THE FACTS.

Certainly, when following the Crimean War, the Powers, seeking to honor Eastern Christians, made a request to the Sublime Porte for a situation that, in terms of the Rights of Nations, would make them equal to Muslims, and when the Sultan deigned, in response to this legitimate request, to publish his famous Hatti-Humayun, the Christian world greeted with outpourings of recognition the initiative of Europe and His Highness's concession.

But unfortunately, almost all the employees of the Porte soon distorted the meaning of the Hatti-Humayun, and adopted measures that would lead to the massacres of 1860. I will prove this in an irrefutable manner through the facts.

For these employees to exterminate the Christians, making a mockery of the Powers' dignity by veiling their eyes, they first had to seduce the bad Christians and secure their complicity for executing the project. Lebanon, being ab antiquo the refuge of Syrian Christians during persecutions, was targeted from the beginning and by all means for its ruin. Following the appointments of Ahmed Pasha as Serasker¹ in Damascus, and Kourchoud Pasha as Mushir² in Beirut, secret commissioners traveled through Syria with the task of having non-Christian nations and tribes sign alliance treaties against the Christians.

Emir Seliman el-Harfouch, a Metouali prince who governed the plains of Baalbek east of Lebanon, having refused, out of a sense of honor, to sign the contract presented to him, warned the Christians of Zahleh. To punish him, the governor of Damascus hastened to resurrect a case against him. But when Seliman el-Harfouch requested a proper investigation, he was unexpectedly attacked by an army corps who, not finding him at his residence, ransacked his house, took his family prisoner to Damascus, then exiled them to Candia where they are currently - if they are still alive. As for the emir, ruined and desperate at seeing his noble conduct thus rewarded, he wandered for some time in the mountains, then, encountering a government agent on the road to Damascus, he attacked and robbed him. This offense brought more active pursuit against him, and after a thousand vicissitudes, he was captured not far from the city of Homs and thrown into a prison in Damascus where he succumbed, no one knew how.

Whatever the case, I dare to recommend to compassionate men the innocent family of Emir Seliman el-Harfouch - if they are still alive, I repeat.

Kourchoud Pasha was not content with coalizing the surrounding tribes against Lebanon; he assembled in Beirut a gathering of bad Christians, Druzes and Muslims, and entrusted to this assembly the task of provoking dissension in North and South Lebanon between the aristocracy and the people, between nations and nations, between districts and districts. It

¹ Marshal. (Mistranslated by the author, Serasker in the Ottoman Empire was the minister who commanded an army., literally meaning head -ser in persian- soldier -asker in Arabic. (Translator's note.)

² Civil Governor (Mistranslated by the author, equals to the rank of Marshall or Army General, the word *muṣīr* مشير, meaning "indicator, pointer, sign", is borrowed from the Arabic root *ṣwr* and is the IV. active participle of the verb *ʿaṣāra* أَشَارَ "to indicate" in the muf'il pattern. (Translator's note.)

was no small matter, in truth, to stir up men who loved righteousness and peace and to thwart the work of those who, knowing the darkness of this plan, multiplied their efforts to maintain good harmony and peace.

As for me, I had resigned as governor of the district of Ehden³ and embraced private life. But my compatriots appealed to my devotion and insisted so strongly that I determined to temporarily resume my position.

The district of Ehden is at the northeastern extremity of Lebanon and is enclosed in a sort of horseshoe formed by the plains of Baalbek, the Turkish districts of Daniyeh, Akkar, Schara and the district of Tripoli. Ehden sits at the summit of a mountain and serves as a summer residence, while during winter, the inhabitants descend to Zgorta which is only an hour from Tripoli.

I was then in Zgorta.

I learned that Saleh Effendi, kaimakam of Tripoli, following a meeting in Beirut with Kourchoud Pasha, had gathered around him some notable Muslims of the city and had communicated to them the order, given to him by the pasha in person, to provoke, under any pretext, a conflict between Muslims and Christians in northern Lebanon, promising them moreover that a corps of regular troops would come to their aid, that they would slaughter the Christians, even those of Tripoli, and seize their property. I must hasten to say that Muslims are generally prudent and endowed with noble humanitarian sentiments. Several of those questioned by Saleh effendi rejected these proposals with horror. However, Saleh effendi could not stop. Soon unjust and arbitrary acts began to strike the Christians of Lebanon who passed through Tripoli; they were falsely accused of blasphemy, and thus several young men were sent to prison without any form of trial.

While calming the spirits of my compatriots, I was painfully preoccupied with the gravity of these facts and informed Emir Bechir-Ahmed, then kaimakam of the Christians of Lebanon; but as this person's Christianity was of recent date and as he had, like several members of his family, close ties with Kourchoud pasha, my remarks received no attention. I was forced to forbid my people from taking the road to Tripoli.

This measure deprived Saleh effendi of the opportunity to initiate conflict. He therefore called to him the officials of Akkar, Danieh and Chara, who are Muslims, under the pretext of settling taxes, and they came accompanied by armed men. They had already been in Tripoli for four days when, towards evening, I received a visit from an honest Muslim friend of mine, Hassen effendi Krameh, who preceded by only an hour the arrival of two inhabitants of Chekka, a Christian village dependent on Lebanon and situated in the district of Koura, south of Tripoli, three hours distance from my residence in Zgharta.

These two men asked me for help; they reported that their village had been attacked unexpectedly by the Muslims of Koura; one man was dead, their flocks had been taken;

³ Burckhardt and other historical geographers think that Ehden is the Beth-Eden of the ancients, that is to say the House of Paradise, a place of delights, the house of the garden, according to the true Hebrew translation ([Original] Translator's Note.)

finally, a chief at the head of several fighters, sent by Saleh effendi, was to join the Muslims of Koura and restart the attack the next day.

I immediately sent ten men to Chekka, ordering them to join with the inhabitants, to avoid any provocation, but to sell their lives dearly if Saleh effendi's envoys carried out their plan. At the same time I put 800 men under arms and advised all of northern Lebanon to prepare for defense within the limits of legitimate right. As my friend Hassen effendi Krameh witnessed these things, I asked him to invite the Tripolitans to observe the Law of Nations and not disturb a tranquility that we absolutely wanted to maintain. He was kind enough to promise me that he would gladly carry out this mission, and undertook to deliver to Saleh effendi a letter in which I said, after enumerating the facts, that I gave no credence to the order he claimed to have from Kourchoud pasha to provoke a conflict. I invited him to withdraw, that very night, the reinforcements sent against the village of Chekka, holding him responsible, in case of refusal, for whatever might happen the next day.

Saleh effendi recalled his men that very night, thus avoiding a conflict.

I did not stop there. I wrote to Kourchoud pasha, and, sending him a copy of my letter to kaimakam Saleh effendi, I clearly explained the situation and requested an official inquiry to prove not only by the facts, but also by the testimony of Muslims, that the kaimakam boasted of having orders to gather the Muslims and provoke a conflict in northern Lebanon, and during this time to massacre the Christians of Tripoli and the Tripolitanian districts. And so that Kourchoud pasha would not consider my letter null and void, I asked the illustrious French consul in Beirut, M. de Lesseps, to take note of it and have it delivered to the pasha. M. de Lesseps immediately consulted with the Maronite bishop of Beirut, Mgr. Tobie, who recorded my letter and insisted on a response.

After five days, Kourchoud pasha did write to me. But his missive contained not a word regarding the requested inquiry; it was limited to expressions of goodwill and consideration.

However, the pasha had undoubtedly measured the consequences of the act that had been about to be accomplished, for the most perfect tranquility was established in Tripoli.

However, Kourchoud pasha's friends, gathered in a committee, soon began to weave another even more dangerous intrigue, by sowing discord between Emir Bechir-Ahmed, kaimakam of the Christians of Lebanon, and his relative Emir Bechir-Assaf, who, though not an official, enjoyed the sympathy of the Lebanese. Now, while Kourchoud pasha protected Emir Bechir-Ahmed, an envoy from Constantinople came to support the cause of Emir Bechir-Assaf. This was cleverly conceived to bring about division in the country.

M. de Lesseps had taken sides with Emir Bechir Ahmed, and when I went to see him in Tripoli, he urged me, for the sake of peace, to spend a few days in Beirut. The irritation between the parties of the two emirs was at its height. I willingly followed this advice.

Upon my arrival in Beirut, I learned from Kadan-bey-El-Khazen and Sheikh Merhi-El-Dahdah that Kourchoud pasha was requesting that the principal chiefs of Emir Bechir-Ahmed's party sign a contract in which they would declare that Emir Bechir-Assaf's party had offended the rights of authority, and that he would immediately give orders to the first

party to attack the other and subdue it by force. They said they were impatiently waiting for me to sign.

The trap was crude. One would have to be blind not to see it.

I therefore replied that it was natural first of all to invite Emir Bechir-Assaf and his party to submit to the law and rules of Lebanon, that they could be brought before a tribunal, and that if, instead of submitting to the sentences of justice, they rebelled, we would attack them to enforce the authority of Bechir-Ahmed kaimakam. I added that, moreover, it seemed pointless to trouble the pasha with Lebanon's internal affairs, in which he had neither the custom nor the obligation to take interest.

My interlocutors replied that Bechir-Ahmed was of an opinion opposed to mine, that he would reject all responsibility onto me, and that finally he would express my refusal to M. de Lesseps. To which I replied that in truth I had conformed to M. de Lesseps' wishes in the common interest and that Bechir-Ahmed was, like myself, perfectly free to express his ideas to the French consul general.

As soon as M. de Lesseps learned of the kaimakam's ideas, he urged him to leave me my full freedom of action in this matter, and following this, Kourchoud pasha, understanding that we could not sign the proposed contract, agreed to convene a meeting of the chiefs of the kaimakam's party, princes, beys and sheikhs, which would be held in his presence and in the presence of the Commissioner of Constantinople, prosecutor for Emir Bechir-Assaf's party.

In this meeting, the pasha first admitted that we were free in everything relating to our autonomy and internal affairs, and I then asked him to revoke the order he had given to the inhabitants of Lebanon to no longer pay taxes to the kaimakam. He replied that he had given this order at the solicitation of the inhabitants and to calm discord. I immediately objected that I did not understand how after this order he could give the kaimakam's party a second order to attack Emir Bechir-Assaf's party based on the first order. Kourchoud pasha, momentarily embarrassed, spoke secretly with the Commissioner of Constantinople and told us that he would publish a new order that would allow the kaimakam to collect taxes according to custom. We separated; and what happened? Assaf's party, instead of relying on the first order and Ahmed's party on the second, reconciled, all submitted to the Kaimakam, and the commissioner returned to Constantinople saying that accord reigned in Lebanon. I need not emphasize the significance of these details; they may seem trivial in Europe, but they illuminate the course of events that would lead to the massacre.



Establishing administrative divisions among the Lebanese to create dissent that would facilitate the execution of the massacre project - such was the course of action that Kourchoud pasha had to follow. Thus he proposed to me, during my stay in Beirut, to accept the nomination as mudir of the Belad-Jubeil districts in northern Lebanon. This would have split the Christians in two; I refused.

It would take too long to enumerate the attempts of the pasha and his committee in this direction. I content myself with saying that a Frenchman whose name remains dear to Lebanon, M. de Lesseps, paralyzed these deplorable intrigues throughout his stay.



Unfortunately, M. de Lesseps was recalled.

We saw the arrival of Count de Bentivoglio at the French consulate general, and even though this created an opportunity, it proved so difficult to sufficiently divide the Christians, despite the efforts of the notables, that they resorted to using the Druze.

While in Beirut the two kaimakams, Christian and Druze, as well as various chiefs of both parties, frequently conferred with Kourchoud pasha, acts of violence were being committed in the mixed districts. Isolated Christians were being killed; the Druze were pillaging a Maronite monastery, and Kourchoud pasha, receiving the Christians' complaints, became angry with them.

Then it happened that a Druze was found dead or killed on a road. The pasha would not accept that the Druze could have lost his life while attempting to take the life of a Christian; he declared that the Christians, who had already had several men assassinated, were all guilty. The regular soldiers were ordered to stand ready, and weapons and ammunition were distributed to the Druze.



Emir Bechir-Ahmed, kaimakam of the Christians⁴, who, for his own purposes, had established his residence in Beirut, sent one day some of his relatives to the villages surrounding Beit Miri, another village opposite Beirut and an hour and a half from this city. A crowd of Druze then attacked the Christians of Beit Miri, while Bechir-Ahmed's relatives prevented Christians from other villages from going to their aid. But Beit Miri defended itself alone with heroic courage and the repulsed Druze fled.



Disconcerted by this failure, Kourchoud pasha devised another means. He pretended to show equal kindness to Christians and Druze, went to Khan-El-Moudeyreh, in Lebanon accompanied by the two kaimakams, Christian and Druze, and convened the notables of both nations, saying that he intended, finally, to establish the foundations of a solid and lasting peace. For this, he submitted to the assembly a contract where the signatories swore in the name of God (whose existence the Druze deny) that if, henceforth, the inhabitants of a Christian village were attacked by the Druze, the Christians would refrain from intervening, would file a complaint with the pasha and await his orders. The Druze made the same commitment. There was indeed some resistance. Hanna-bey-El-Assad, a Christian

⁴ Emir Karam has already suggested that Bechir-Ahmed was a questionable Christian. In order to become kaimakam of the Christians, he had renounced his Druze beliefs.

notable, objected that men of aggression would feel encouraged by such a contract. But Kourchoud pasha and the kaimakams insisted: it was signed.

As a health indisposition had prevented me from attending the meeting, a commissioner came to find me. He brought, with the contract, an order from Kourchoud pasha and Bechir-Ahmed requiring me to sign, if I did not want to assume responsibility for the dissensions that might break out between Christians and Druze. I replied that if the contract was legal, my submission to the law exempted me from signing it, just as if the contract was extra-legal, justice forbade me from signing it; I added that I wished to enjoy my freedom assured by law, and affirmed that my full and complete respect for the law guaranteed me against any responsibility. Then, I informed M. de Bentivoglio of everything, that is to say, of the contract, the orders received, my response, and asked him to take note of the schemes of Kourchoud pasha and his accomplices. The consul general hastened to write to me simply that he would provide, without telling me, it is true, by what means.



For my part, I judged that conflict was near. We shall see that I was not mistaken.

I declared to the notables of the districts of Ehden, Bcharré and Zgharta, which are the northernmost districts of Lebanon, that their duty and their interest called them to use their influence to avoid any conflict, but also to employ all their power to prevent the fire from spreading should anyone attempt to rekindle it. They were all of my opinion. But the unfortunate situation of these districts only allowed me to prepare 400 men to march in case of need.



Soon the Druze gathered quietly and in groups near the Christian village of Haded⁵, located less than an hour from Beirut, the residence of Kourchoud pasha from whom they expected reinforcement if necessary.

Five hundred Maronites from Kesrouan hastened to rush to the threatened village, and Kourchoud pasha came with his army to the village of Hasmiyeh to block their passage; then, in agreement with M. de Bentivoglio, he delegated the Maronite bishop, Mgr Tobie, with the mission to dissuade them, either through gentleness or through threats, from their enterprise. At the name of France pronounced by the bishop, the Maronites returned to Kesrouan, with the exception of 20 men who, from afar, wanted to monitor the outcome of the affair.



With the Maronites thus removed and the Druze remaining massed around Haded, a cannon shot, fired by order of Kourchoud pasha, gave the signal. The Druze rushed upon the Christians of Haded, who, seeing themselves caught between the assailants and the army,

⁵ The idea of attacking, not a village far from the pasha's residence, but Haded, which can be seen from Beirut, is, by itself, clear evidence that the Druze were acting at the instigation of Kourchoud pasha.

abandoned the village and rushed toward Beirut. But all those who could not flee were killed by the Druze, who, under the eyes of Kourchoud pasha and the army, set fire to Haded.

After this criminal exploit, the Druze advanced into the mixed district of Metn, moving from one Christian village to another, putting everything to fire and sword.

Ahead of the Druze marched the relatives of kaimakam Bechir-Ahmed, who persuaded the Christians not to unite their forces, and behind the Druze, Kourchoud pasha, with his troops, supervised the proceedings.

I must not omit to say that the pasha had also won over Emir Bechir-Assaf.



At the news of these excesses, which constituted a flagrant offense to the Law of Nations as well as to the laws of the empire, I departed with 400 men and, after two days and a night of forced march, I arrived at Bekfaya, the first town of the Metn district. At the gates of Bekfaya houses were burning.

The Druze immediately withdrew without combat beyond a valley, towards the middle of the district, and sent one of their chiefs, Sheikh Hussein Talhouk, to Kourchoud pasha who encouraged the Druze to be brave, and said that "Karam would find before him the cannons of authority."

Indeed, a messenger came to find me and brought two letters, one from the pasha, the other from M. de Bentivoglio, letters in which they urged me to return to Ehden and forbade me to intervene in affairs which, they said, did not concern me. I replied: "These affairs concern me all too much, and I will not withdraw."

The Christians of Metn began to gather at Bekfaya and in the surrounding area. Four hundred Christian fighters from Kesrouan also arrived.

As soon as Kourchoud pasha had my response, without losing time, he called the consuls general of Beirut to Hazmiyeh and communicated my letter to them:

"Karam is right," he told them, "the Druze are the aggressors. They have resolved to attack the town of Zahleh as well, but if you pledge to prevent Karam from leaving Bekfaya to attack the Druze either from the Metn side or from the Zahleh side, I will send troops that will protect the Christians from new violence."

The consuls general approved the pasha, and M. Weckbecker, consul general of Austria, as well as M. de Bentivoglio wrote to me what had just been concluded; only the latter added that if I left Bekfaya, either toward Metn or toward Zahleh, I would assume full responsibility for the conflict and would find against me not only the government of the Porte, but also all the governments of Europe.



The palace of the late Emir Haidar, former kaymakam of the Christians, had been offered to me as a residence in Bekfaya. Soon Emir Bechir-Assaf and Emir Amin-Ballama, relatives

of kaymakam Bechir-Ahmed whom I had protected from the Maronites' indignation, arrived at the palace to see, without my knowledge, Monsignor Jajah, bishop of the Metten district, and Sheikh Ide Htatem, a notable of the town. But as the bishop was with me at that moment, they had him called, and Emir Bechir-Assaf told him in secret that the Catholic bishop of Zahlé, disapproving of the Maronites' conduct, had complained about it to Kourchoud Pasha and had made a commitment, along with his diocesans, to surrender their weapons; that the non-united Greeks were going to make the same complaints, and that, in short, it would be appropriate for the bishop of Metten and his diocesans to do the same and offer to surrender the weapons of this district to the pasha.

Monsignor Jajah objected, with as much sense as firmness, that he would do nothing without consulting me, and wanted to hold the meeting in my presence. Then the venerable prelate called upon Emir Bechir-Assaf to explain these matters, and as he spoke, both his own expression and that of the other emir betrayed their underlying intent to deceive. When I asked Bechir-Assaf from whom he had received his information:

"I must keep the name of the one who revealed them to me secret," he replied.

"In the presence of a general coalition, wouldn't we do better to simply lay down our arms?"

"No, it would be better to surrender them to Kourchoud Pasha, who, in this case, would take our defense."

"For what reason does the pasha not want us to defend ourselves? Can you at least say if your information comes from a friend of the pasha, and if this friend has given you sufficient proof of the pasha's good intentions?"

"I know nothing from the pasha's side; but a friend of mine was at the Bishop of Zahlé's when His Grace sent his message to the pasha."

The veil was tearing more and more. I then asked Monsignor Jajah to send someone from his retinue to gather information from the Bishop of Zahlé, and at this, the two emirs complained about my lack of trust. We understood, Monsignor Jajah and I, that the Bishop of Zahlé had not conducted himself as claimed, and Monsignor Jajah, raising his hands, thanked heaven for having saved him from this trap of dishonor and deceit.

His Grace left the room with me and, shortly after, Emir Bechir-Assaf, presenting himself to us, humbly asked my pardon, put his hand in my belt⁶ and offered to go bravely defend the country's interests wherever I would indicate. He simultaneously begged the bishop to vouch for the sincerity of his word.

"Conduct yourself," I told him, "according to the duty and dignity of your rank."



Seeing, on one side, the dangers threatening Zahlé, and, on the other, the responsibility that would be placed on all Christians if I were to leave Bekfaya, I charged Emir Daoud-Mourad,

⁶ According to Oriental custom, a man who wants to obtain forgiveness for an offense, implore protection, or protest his loyalty, puts his hand in the belt of the offended party.

an honest and brave man, to go immediately to Zahlé with 200 fighters, and I sent two cavalrymen as scouts to monitor the movement of the Druzes and inform me if they were marching on Zahlé.

As for myself, after leaving a good defense for the city without leaving the territory of Bekfaya, I moved with 800 fighters to the Mar-Elyas-Choya monastery, which is at the extremity of this territory, on the side of Zahlé. Moreover, I had written to M. de Bentivoglio, telling him that if the Druzes respected the Christians, I would remain immobile, but if they resumed their aggressions, I would not intend to bear any responsibility.

In my eyes, in law and in fact, the responsibility for spilled blood would fall on me only in cases where, being able to stop the blood, I let it flow.

Zahlé is located on the side of Beka and Balbek, six hours away from Bekfaya, which is separated by the highest mountain of Lebanon.

On the same day, the Druzes, or rather Kourchoud pacha's soldiers, under the costume and name of Druzes on one side, and Kourchoud pacha's soldiers, in military uniform, on the other side, surrounded Zahlé.

The two cavalrymen I had sent could not return, but during the night, I learned that Zahlé was under attack.

I departed in haste, and in three hours of rapid travel, I was at the approaches of the city. The Christians of Zahlé had already abandoned their homes, taking their families and their herds. The town was delivered to the flames. The Druzes had withdrawn, and I could see at a short distance the regular army, whose tents were enveloped by the smoke that the wind was chasing their way. Some houses were still intact, but I saw a soldier running out of one of these houses which soon caught fire. As I was accompanied only by a small number of cavalrymen who formed my advance guard, I hastened to turn back, in order to stop the main body of my men. I did not want to provide a pretext for accusation to Kourchoud pacha, who had guaranteed Zahlé to the consuls general of the Powers, and I went to Kesrouan, towards the retreat that the unfortunate inhabitants of Zahlé had chosen; it was facing Bekfaya. There, I gathered all the Christian leaders under a single command.



The inhabitants of Deir-El-Kamar had already, without suspicion, consigned their weapons to the commander of two battalions. This commander also claimed to want to take the Druzes' weapons to avoid civil war. But he did nothing of the sort, and gathered twelve hundred Christian fighters who were in the city into the barracks, among his soldiers. Then, he called Druzes and handed over, one by one, these poor Christians, all young men, disarmed, who were massacred without mercy.

This fact had the greatest resonance in Europe and raised a sentiment of horror. I abstain from any reflection. Only, I must say that several Druze notables, who are generally humane, took no part in the crime; on the contrary, they cried out, full of a just indignation

– "Let the authority immolate us with our Christian compatriots rather than employ our *ignorants*⁷ in the execution of such a cowardly and execrable act."

The Druze notables were removed, and the "ignorant" were launched into the city by the military authority. Soon, everything was pillaged, sacked, and reduced to ashes.



Kourchoud pacha was not to reap these laurels alone. He had a competitor who had the order to triumph in Damascus.

Ahmed pacha, serasker of the Damascus province, had also ordered the Christians of Hasbaya and Rachaya to hand over their weapons to the regular soldiers. The latter called some Druzes and handed over the Christians who were massacred, as in Deir-El-Kamar.

In Damascus, there was a variation that Ahmed pacha did not expect. He had prepared everything for the massacre, and his soldiers would have been more than sufficient; but, as it was necessary to persuade Europe that the excesses were committed by the Druzes, he brought in a certain number of them. However, the inhabitants of the Midane quarter, whose character is intrepid and generous, prevented the Druzes from entering the city. An Arab prince, famous for his long wars, Abdel-Kader, whose residence was in the quarter, and who had 300 devoted persons in his service, saved a crowd of Christians, and it almost came to a fight between this prince and Ahmed pacha, who had to resign himself to sending his soldiers and the mob into the other quarters of the city where the greatest part of the Christians was immolated.

This took place two days after the massacre of Deir-El-Kamar.

In Beirut, the Muslim populace, united with some Druzes, set to work by killing an unguilty Christian. "He had killed a Muslim," said the murderers, who immediately spread through the city, striking the Christians.

It was at this moment that M. de Bentivoglio accepted an offense that I abstain from reporting, and that, to show his moderation or perhaps to calm the popular exaltation, he gave a grand ball which, I was told, Kourchoud pacha and his employees attended. From the summits of Kesrouan, we could see the French consulate palace all lit up, and none of us could understand that, in the presence of the misfortunes striking an entire country, a man belonging to a civilized and Christian nation would give a party.



Other massacres took place in all mixed districts, as well as along the seashore, between Beirut and Sayda. I quickly pass over these horrors.

⁷ The Druzes are divided into wise and ignorant (Akkal and Jahal.) The Sages are the educated men, and the ignorant form the mass of the people.

All the Christians of Damascus and southern Lebanon, escaped from the sword and flame who could not make it to Europe, took refuge in Kesrouan and towards BeWyal. But provisions were lacking.

Kourchoud pacha blockaded the sea, such that a certain number of men and women died of hunger. Our position was awful; it became impossible for me to provide simultaneously for defense and provisions for this multitude. But, thanks to the pious Maronite Patriarch and several notables from Beirut and Kesrouan, we were able to fulfill sacred duties.



Soon we learned that Kourchoud pacha had dispatched, by sea, to Tripoli a corps of troops. This corps was camped at the foot of the citadel overlooking the mountain, and the moudirs of Daniyeh, Akkar, and Chara were gathered to prepare hostilities against us. At the same time, the Druzes threatened to attack Bekfaya, and a commissioner came to inform me that Kourchoud pacha intended to send his soldiers to defend this position. I then declared to him clearly that in this case we would let the Druzes trample Bekfaya in order to fight against the soldiers.

Meanwhile, I recommended to the Christians of northern Lebanon to attack Tripoli as soon as the soldiers advanced against the mountain, adding that, soon, I myself would be, with six thousand fighters, under the walls of this city.

Informed of these things, Kourchoud pacha was "like paralyzed" and his corps of troops no longer threatened either the north or the south of Lebanon. Muslims and Druzes ceased their aggressions. In brief, there were no more massacres, and what I have reported until now shows that these massacres were committed only where soldiers were present.

After all that we had suffered from the arbitrariness and cruelty of the pachas, and in the presence of circumstances full of threats and dangers, the Christians of Lebanon, according to their customs, named me their prince, and, thanks to the Hellenic government, we received the first assistance to which were added the gifts of generous Europe.

Sometime later, His Excellency the Sultan, who had granted the Hatti-Hamayoun at the request of the five great Powers, and these Powers themselves seeing their dignity compromised by the pachas and the law trampled underfoot, deigned to send commissioners who successively went to Beirut. Fuad pacha, a skillful diplomatic plenipotentiary, arrived first, and was followed by the squadrons of the Powers and the French expedition.

From then on, the Christians of the mixed districts, where massacres and fires had taken place, returned to their homelands to collect, among the ruins, the remains of their dead.



The commissioners of the five great Powers first obtained the arrest of the Druze leaders, then they went with Fuad pacha to Damascus.

It is reported that Ahmed pacha said to Fuad pacha: "If you want to submit me to an official inquiry, I will show you the orders I received from Constantinople to massacre the Christians."

Fuad pacha asked to see these orders secretly, confiscated them, and had Ahmed pacha shot, so that the commissioners could not examine his case. He also hanged some Muslims in Damascus, permitted taxes and recalled conscripts, things which until then had been very difficult. Finally, he dismissed Kourchoud pacha and exiled several Druze leaders for a certain time.



Meanwhile, M. Béclard, the French commissioner, urged me to accept the nomination of kaimakam of the Christians of Lebanon. I asked him not to impose this charge on me and gave him several reasons for my reluctance.

But he insisted so strongly, saying that my refusal would wound the sensitivities of France, that I consented, on the condition, however, that Fuad pacha would accept my resignation if the policy of the Ottoman government deviated from the legitimate interests of the Christians, for my duties did not allow me to deceive either a government entrusting me with a service or my compatriots. Fuad pacha adhered to this condition, and I provisionally took the functions of kaimakam.



Some members of Kourchoud pacha's committee soon gained Fuad pacha's good graces, and, following several discussions this high official had with M. de Bentivoglio and General Beaufort, the latter declared to me, to my great astonishment, that "being too attached to my religion, I could not satisfy everyone at once, and that he needed to find for France a candidate free of prejudices."

"That is no problem, general," I said to him, "I am ready to resign, and immediately."

"No; such conduct would be hostile to France. If you want to show your friendship, you must first convince the Maronites to accept Emir Mejid Chehab as their prince."



This emir had changed his religion, and was arriving, with his parents, from Egypt where they had found a safe and generous asylum during the massacres. I could not believe that the Maronites would accept him as their prince, except perhaps Monsignor Bishop Tobie, who, in his great kindness, wished him well and was even linked to him by interests.

I pointed out to the general that, far from gaining something by executing his project, he could lose everything.

"The religion of the prince, in a country subject to laws and the Law of Nations, does not serve as a rule for the religion of the inhabitants," I said to him, "and it is better not to concern oneself with what touches conscience, but to be interested in a nation devoted to

France, by supporting the original autonomy of Lebanon; you will thus satisfy, believe me, all the protecting governments of my country. As for me, I value your good graces more than my personal interests, or rather I have no personal interests, and I can prove this to you immediately, by engaging, on my honor and in writing, to accept no public function neither in Lebanon nor elsewhere."

Unfortunately, M. Beaufort did not appreciate my language any more than he would permit my resignation, and one could be convinced at every encounter that no one in Syria had the fortune of pleasing the commanding general and his staff. But I hasten to say that this was not the case with General Ducrot and all the officers of the French expedition. They lavished their sympathies and assistance to the victims, with an élan and a generosity worthy of France. General Ducrot, especially, constantly sacrificed his own interest to exalt the dignity of the flag: he showed us eminent qualities of heart, and his name remains in the Orient as a symbol of honor and loyalty.



The events that took place during my kaimakamship do not merit being reported. As I had accepted these official functions only provisionally, I urgently requested to resign, and it was only after resigning three times that the superior authority consented to relieve me of them.

I then lived a few months away from public affairs, striving, to prove my gratitude towards the beneficent Powers, to use my personal influence for general tranquility.

A new constitution was granted to Lebanon, and Daoud pacha, created governor, wanted to entrust me with a function. My refusal displeased him.

A few days later, a member of the famous Kourchoud pacha's committee came to northern Lebanon and put himself in contact with some troublemakers from the district of Ehden and elsewhere, whom I had previously sent to the galleys for their unfortunate conduct. These individuals went to the district of Koura, largely inhabited by non-united Greeks, and, claiming to be sent by me and exalting my name, committed detestable aggressions.

Although this artifice fooled no one, Daoud pacha managed to obtain a protest from the non-united Greeks accusing me of these aggressions, immediately went to northern Lebanon with a small military force, and threatened all the Maronites.

Now, I must say that the non-united Greeks of Tripoli had found in me a friend. During the Crimean War, they had been forbidden, to their great detriment, to leave the city. I obtained that they be left free and I received a certain number of them in Ehden.

Daoud pacha's procedures caused a sort of exaltation in Lebanon.

After calming my compatriots, I went, accompanied by several notables, to the pacha's house to provide him proof that the aggressions of which I was accused of instigating were the work of some known wrongdoers, and I respectfully asked him to allow me to pursue them and deliver them to him bound hand and foot. He flatly refused my proposition and drew from my visit a pretext that, despite all human prudence, I could not have foreseen,

to accuse me to Fuad pacha and the Commissioners of the Powers of having come to threaten him. It was evident that Daoud pacha, having come to Lebanon with a small military force, was at the absolute mercy of the Lebanese. Threatening him would have been immature. If, impossibly, one had forgotten the laws of justice to the point of not recognizing authority, one would not have threatened, but acted.

Fuad pacha, whose intellectual reach and political finesse were above these miserable subterfuges, nonetheless called me to Beirut. I went there immediately, while Daoud pacha went to the district of Koura and from there to the district of Ehden where he attached to his service the wrongdoers he had attributed to me.

In Beirut, I learned that Daoud pacha had persuaded the Commissioners of the Powers not to receive my visit and to remove me from Lebanon.

I was thus forbidden from declaring the truth, and, without prior judgment, I was sent to Constantinople.



Thanks to the protection of France, I was able to go to Egypt. I promised M. the Marquis de Moustier, French ambassador to Constantinople, that I would spend in this country the rest of the three years that Daoud pacha's mandate was to last, and M. le Marquis de Moustier promised me in turn that at the expiration of this mandate, justice would be done to me.

When the time came, I resolved to return to Constantinople, but during my passage through Smyrne, I found M. de Bentivoglio appointed consul general of France in that city.

"M. de Moustier has gone to Paris for his personal affairs," he told me, "and your trip to Constantinople is inopportune."

"I will therefore go to Paris," I replied.

"Ah! No," he retorted, "you need a special permission for that. I will write to Paris."

After a few days, whether he had written or not, the special permission was not granted to me.

"Your trip to Paris is inopportune. Daoud's mandate has been renewed for five years, and you must come to an understanding with the pacha."

"Understanding is always easy on my side," I responded. "I only ask to return to my home and live entirely submissive to the laws and regular power of the pacha. If the pacha opposes my living in Lebanon, I will remain in Syria."

"None of that is possible," M. de Bentivoglio continued. "You will have permission to live neither at home nor in Syria, unless you accept an employment from Daoud pacha."

I repeated in vain what I had already said many times, that I was asking for nothing and wanted nothing, except a regular judgment that would restore my freedom; I appealed in vain to the Law of Nations and to justice:

"You must put yourself in the service of Daoud pacha," M. de Bentivoglio obstinately repeated.

"But that would be forced service; this type of punishment is not in your codes; and French loyalty, which wanted, in agreement with the Sultan and the Powers, to secure the fate of the Libanais, cannot tolerate an exception for me alone and put me, so to speak, outside the law."

"Politics requires it," he replied.

M. de Bentivoglio gravely concluded our conversations with this aphorism.

In vain, I addressed several letters to M. de Moustier in Paris and had a long correspondence with M. de Bentivoglio's successor in Beirut, M. Outrey. Seeing the futility of my claims, I finally went to Lebanon, and, arriving at my home, I wrote to the consul that I had returned to Lebanon to live as a simple citizen submitted to the laws and authority, but determined to defend myself against unjust violence.



During my absence, the Maronites of the North had driven out Daoud pacha's administrative personnel; I immediately obtained from my compatriots the recall of the employees, and I asked them to demonstrate, on every occasion, their respect for the new constitution as well as for the representative of the Sovereign. It is not fitting for me to say myself the enthusiastic welcome I received and the festivities that greeted my return; but I can truly affirm that calm returned to Lebanon. The government would have been easy for Daoud pacha, if he had not put his own interest or passion before the interest and will of our Sovereign.



Although he was well aware of the people's misery caused by poor harvests, he did not hesitate to increase the taxes in an exorbitant manner, despite the figure being fixed by the constitution. Petitions were addressed to him from all sides to implore his mercy. He paid no attention, did not even deign to respond, suddenly invaded Kesrouan, at the head of 800 indigenous militia⁸, 1,000 regular soldiers, and 300 mounted dragons, and had the principal inhabitants of this district arrested and thrown into his prison at Bet-Eddin. What fault had these inhabitants committed? By virtue of what law and what judgment were they punished? This is something the pacha did not take the trouble to make known.



These procedures did not find the Libanais indifferent. In the North especially, the agitation was assuming a serious character. I hastened to reassure the spirits, I demanded submission,

⁸ The pacha of Lebanon receives from the Porte 3,000 purses (300,000 francs) which are meant to maintain 1,504 indigenous militia men. If he has only 800 or 1,000 men, he attributes to himself, as a legitimate profit, the 233,000 or 166,000 francs he thus saves.

and, sure of being heard, I wrote to the pacha that I would answer for public tranquility and the respect of his authority and implored him to grant a trial to the notables he had thrown in prison. Daoud immediately responded to thank me for my zeal, asking me to continue my work of pacification, promising on his side to have the prisoners judged.

I went to Nahr-Ebrahim (River of Abraham), accompanied by various members of the clergy, sheiks and notables from the northern districts, in order to have a meeting in Jouni with the pacha. But since we had with us a retinue of 80 people, armed according to the country's constant custom, Daoud pacha estimated that the means of accusation already used by Kourchoud pacha was not yet exhausted. He expressed strong displeasure, exclaimed that I was coming to threaten him, and called the French consul in Beirut, M. des Essarts, who had replaced M. Outrey.

The consul was willing to go to Jouni and urged me to visit the pacha, with an escort of only eight men. To which I responded that despite the unjust distrust shown by Daoud, I would hasten to subscribe to this desire, if the consul general would kindly guarantee that no violence would be committed against my person and my people. The consul general approved my reserve and requested a formal assurance from the pacha, who postponed the matter until the next day.

During the night, Daoud called new troops from Beirut, and, before daybreak, I was suddenly assailed by the dragons. My companions, torn from sleep, seized their arms; inhabitants from the surrounding areas joined them, and the dragons were pursued with a vivacity they did not expect, as far as Meameltein. I did not want to take any part in the combat or the pursuit, but was concerned with rallying my companions so as not to leave them crushed by the militia and soldiers who, being in Ghazir, had received the order to set out. Thus, I returned to Nahr-Ebrahim and from there I passed to Jbeil.

Perhaps unaware that the provocation came from the dragons, M. des Essarts attributed the responsibility for the struggle to me; the pacha declared that I was guilty "as a private individual" and said he would arrest me personally.

I therefore considered it appropriate to escape the arbitrary action, passed through Zgorta, my summer residence, where I invited the inhabitants to submission and respect for authority, and departed for Benacheh with 250 people, resolved, like myself, to forge a passage through the snows covering the Lebanese mountains, and to go to the desert.

Soon Daoud pacha launched against me his militia, 3,500 regular soldiers and his dragons, forming an army corps under the command of Emin pacha, who marched on Zgorta and joined the troops stationed in Ihal.

The inhabitants of Zgorta took up arms, but the army allowed them time to withdraw with their families and entered only to pillage the houses.

After comfortably installing himself in my home, Emin pacha sent two large detachments, one to Ihal, the other to Békeftine, opposite Benacheh, and had me told that he desired to have an interview with me at the bishopric of Tripoli, near Benacheh. My desire for peace was so sincere that I did not hesitate to accept the rendezvous and, at his request, signed a

contract in which I committed myself to submit to any regular judgment of the authority. He himself promised to telegraph to Beirut and Constantinople to request this judgment.

However, the next day, some of my companions who were monitoring the Benacheh pass were assailed by 400 militiamen, and the soldiers advanced against me in three columns. We were forced to defend our lives. The battle lasted eight hours and was bloody. Defeated, despite their enormous numerical superiority, the soldiers, leaving their dead and a certain number of prisoners, abandoned Zgorta, Ihal and Békeftine to reach Tripoli.

After this defeat, Daoud pacha, remaining isolated in Lebanon, fell de facto under my power; but I abstained from any offensive movement, hoping that, in their loyalty, His Imperial Majesty the Sultan and the five Powers would appreciate my conduct and finally restore tranquility according to the rules of justice.



Vain hopes. Soon Derviche Pasha, the serasker, arrived from Constantinople with 10,000 soldiers, gathered other military forces from the garrisons of Syria, and sent this army after me under the command of Division General Hassan Pasha.

The reader may be tired of my repetitions but I must tell the truth before accepting this unequal fight, since, entrenched in Benachee, I had only a few hundred men. I wrote again to the pasha who came to attack me, to renew, with the assurance of my submission to the Empire's laws, the request for a regular trial.

Hassan Pasha replied to me: "I have orders to go to Benachee, and if you abandon this position to me, I will not follow you."

I left Benachee; and Hassan Pasha entered immediately.

To understand the battles that follow, I must indicate the layout of the places. Benachee, situated on a plateau in the mountains, has above it three villages forming a triangle: Sebel on the right, Ayto at the summit, Obra on the left. Ehden, which dominates everything from a great height, is located slightly to the east of the triangle, while to the south, towards the plain, are found the districts of Batroun and Jbeil which high peaks separate from the forests and deserts of Baalbek.

Upon leaving Benachee, I had only one path to take, that of the upper mountains. I divided the 800 men who accompanied me to occupy Sebel, Ayto and Obra, while I remained in this last position.

Hassan Pasha, faithful to the tactics employed against me, hurried to pursue me. He attacked and took rather quickly the villages of Sebel and Ayto where there was barely time to save the women and children. He also took Obra, but with great losses.

Then, encouraged by this success, he sent the detachments that had taken Ayto through steep paths and directed them toward Ehden. We had to protect all that was most dear to us; we put up fierce resistance; the fight was bloody; we retook Obra and Ayto and confined

the soldiers between this last position and Sebel. We had fought on both sides for ten hours and the firing only ceased three and a half hours after sunset.

Hassan Pasha then informed the Bishop of Tripoli that the army had come solely to assist Daoud Pasha, and that if I agreed to leave Lebanon, I would not be pursued. As one can see, it was always the same tactics from the authorities; nevertheless I did not tire, on my side, of maintaining my system of loyal submission. Having gone back up to Ehden, I recommended to some priests and notables to remove the families and to go to the Bishop of Tripoli to ask him to assure Hassan Pasha that I was leaving Ehden and heading toward Batroun and Jbeil in order to find a passage through the snows and make my way, outside of Lebanon, to the region of Baalbek. This was to fulfill once again the desires expressed by the Empire's agents. Moreover, suspecting that the general-in-chief would come to Ehden, I gave orders to my servants to receive him with all the honors and all the considerations of Oriental hospitality.

Hassan first demanded that the priests and notables affirm to him in writing that I had left Ehden, and two days later, he went there and was joined by Daoud.

These two chiefs spent three days in my house, then upon their departure, Daoud had this house given over to pillage and flames, while launching the troops anew in pursuit of me. Do I need to qualify these proceedings?

Daoud Pasha's militia went to the district of Jbeil and engaged in the beginning of a fight with the inhabitants. To prevent them from becoming compromised with this militia and with the regular troops that came behind it, I withdrew, crossed the snows, taking with me only twenty men, and took refuge in the forests of the district of Baalbek; but the kaimakam of this province, assisted by a superior officer, a corps of troops and a detachment of gendarmerie, totaling 1,100 soldiers, came to meet me at Wadi-el-Nessour (Valley of Eagles). Seven men, who formed my vanguard, received some gunfire and returned fire, while four others of my companions, masked by the rocks, fired on the flank of the soldiers who retreated, leaving at the hamlet of Ainata some of their provisions, to return more quickly to Baalbek. They arrived in disorder in this city and requested reinforcements from Damascus.

The Damascus garrison set out on the march, and the retreat that Hassan Pasha had offered me being cut off, I turned back.

In a few days, Daoud Pasha dispatched, besides his militia, an army corps to search for me. Some Maronites had joined me; we were sixty. I had some successful encounters which cooled the ardor of the soldiers, and Daoud Pasha, who had declared me "a guilty private individual" and who had given himself the surname of "the just," inaugurated in several villages of northern Lebanon a system of persecution which even the fertile mind of Kourchoud Pasha had not imagined. According to him, the inhabitants had become criminals by not blocking my routes, and by not accompanying the soldiers on their expeditions. But the Maronites found their conscience clear regarding this accusation and showed themselves indignant about it.



Seduced by Daoud's good graces, M. des Essarts joined with the pasha to turn against me a person whom I greatly respected because of his character - I speak of Monseigneur Valerga, Patriarch of Jerusalem. The truth about the state of affairs and about the persecution I was suffering had begun to come to light in Paris and Constantinople, and it was important for the pasha and consul general to justify their conduct through such an important testimony. At their call, and at the pasha's expense, this ecclesiastical dignitary came to Beirut, and I was told that if I requested an interview with His Grace in writing, He would take interest in my fate and smooth out all difficulties in the direction of justice.

I did not hesitate to address myself immediately to the Patriarch who replied that "he could not confer with me unless I committed in writing to follow his advice."

I therefore sent to His Grace "the formal assurance of my complete submission to ecclesiastical and civil laws." But this appeared insufficient to the Patriarch who, according to what I was assured to my great regret, entrusted two letters, one to Daoud Pasha, the other to M. des Essarts, in which he testified, in substance, that "I would not submit either to spiritual or official authority."

Copies of these letters were apparently communicated to Paris and Constantinople and more severe and energetic measures were ordered against me.

To the troops already massed in North Lebanon was added a corps of 800 Muslims from Daniyeh, reinforced by the Tripoli gendarmerie and placed under the command of mudir Ahmed-Agha-Elenja. Meeting me at Ain-el-Jawz (Fountain of Walnuts) in company of the sixty men I mentioned above, he wanted to coordinate a simultaneous and decisive attack with other corps that he sent to warn, but, yielding to impatience, he attacked me unexpectedly, allowed himself to be routed and even abandoned prisoners whom I did not delay, it is true, in setting free while even returning their weapons to them.

This setback discouraged the troops and delivered to me the passage I was seeking to make my way to the forests of Ehden. After some time and certain successful encounters, I established myself near Ain-Karna (Corner Fountain), on the summit of the mountain that dominates Ehden. Although I could see at my feet my residence and the movements of the soldiers, I lived there peacefully for some time.

While this relative tranquility lasted, a corps of 2,000 soldiers remained camped near Ain-el-Waach (Fountain of the Wild Beast), in the vicinity of Ehden and an hour from my retreat; other detachments were also stationed in the surroundings.



At this time, Monseigneur Valerga went to see Monseigneur Paul Massad, Maronite Patriarch, and urged him to excommunicate me, if he did not want, along with his bishops, to incur the disgrace of Daoud Pasha and M. des Essarts and be imprisoned in chains. Naturally, this Patriarch refused to excommunicate a man who was asking for justice, but having become sensitive to the threats, he wrote to me advising me to follow Monseigneur Valerga's Will; and from this arose between us a serious misunderstanding.

Despite my profound respect for the authority of these two personages, I took the liberty of asking them to consider the text of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema" and to conclude that, if it were launched, the excommunication would not fall upon me. This matter therefore had no follow-up.

Soon I received a visit from an officer sent by Derviche Pasha. "If you all surrender without condition," he said, "the pasha will take interest in you." "The Sultan," I replied, "is God's shadow on earth, and it is the duty of the imperial government to grant justice to those who, like me, ask only for that."

The officer withdrew, and on the fourth night after, I was surrounded with my 60 companions by about 800 soldiers, coming simultaneously from all points. It is appropriate to report what happened.

Two of my sentries came to inform me that troops were climbing toward us by the most difficult paths. I had no trouble understanding that they must have closed off all my exits. I gathered my men, had fires lit around Ain-Karna, and, under cover of darkness, we made our way, without being seen, to another position in the forest of Ehden to await daylight.

At the first light of dawn, my sentries found themselves a few steps from those of the troops who were completing the circle around the position I had left. I withdrew a second time, and the nearby troop corps followed me slowly, without wanting to engage in combat. But soon I encountered soldiers who had been sent during the night from Tripoli, along with others who had arrived from Beirut.

I headed toward the center of a valley that separates Lebanon from the district of Daniyeh, and I reached a gorge of high rocks cut straight up. Seeing myself pursued on three sides by troops who, at half rifle range, were not firing, I understood that a detachment must be closing off the valley's exit. Thus, I was dealing with several thousand men, and we were, I repeat, only sixty.

I grouped my dear companions, except for four who had fallen behind. "Here is our last hour," I told them, "we have to choose between death under arms or death in servitude: which do you prefer?" "Death under arms," they replied.

We then hastened our march, and finding the valley's exit completely closed by several detachments pressed one behind the other, we invoked the name of God, Allah, which, shouted with all the force of our voices, echoed in the valley, while we rushed upon the soldiers whose ranks opened before us. The firing only began against us when we had already crossed the circle. Having then divided into two groups which protected each other mutually, we were able, after half an hour, to gain a position that could only be attacked from one side. There we halted; it was ten o'clock in the morning; the combat ceased. Two of my companions had been wounded: one escaped, the other fell into the hands of the troops along with the four who had fallen behind in the valley. These five men were sent to Daoud Pasha's prison at Beit ed-Din.



In the presence of eight to nine thousand soldiers, I dismissed my companions, except for four who accompanied me to a retreat where I remained hidden for forty days. Then the military chiefs enlisted magicians who, invoking the demon, hoped to discover the location of my retreat.



The troop corps having left the mountain heights due to the snows, I returned, still in hiding, to the vicinity of Lebanon.

Daoud Pasha sent Ragi Bey Hanna Daher with 300 Christian and Metouali soldiers to search the villages clinging to the flanks of the highest peaks of northern Lebanon which the inhabitants, according to their custom, had abandoned to stay in the plain. Under the pretext of searching for me there, Ragi Bey and his men pillaged the houses.

Upon news of these latest excesses committed under my name and the plan to conduct similar searches in Ehden where there were only four or five guardians, I went at night, followed by eight men, to my house which had only a few roofs left and blackened walls. Only one of Ehden's guardians knew of my arrival; I kept him near me and when Ragi Bey and his soldiers came, he showed himself to them, and from the top of a terrace called out to them:

"What do you want to do in this burned house? You come to search for the master - spare me this pain."

They did not listen and penetrated into the interior which was vast. I ordered my eight companions not to appear before being called, and presented myself, alone and armed, at the top of a staircase whose steps they were climbing. At the sight of me, they withdrew precipitously, and my companions pursued them for a long time in various directions. One wounded man and three prisoners remained in our hands.

I entrusted the wounded man to a priest who cared for him, and released the prisoners.

The news of my presence in Ehden having spread, numerous companions came running, but wanting to avoid a conspicuous gathering, I returned at night to my solitude, followed by the eight men I just mentioned.

A few days later, Daoud Pasha sent reinforcement men to Ragi Bey with the mission of throwing down the remains of my house.



Awad Bey, a Metouali, came to the village of Arges with 300 men, partly from his "nation", partly Christians; Ragi Bey, at the head of 200 men appeared near Bcharri, and the pasha's militia stood ready to come to their aid.

I then recognized the mistake I had made and how wrong I had been to believe that my moderation and care not to provoke conflicts would facilitate the action of justice. I had lost time and sacrificed opportunities for victorious revenge. So I went, in broad daylight,

to the village of Ejbeh, between Argos and Bcharri, two hours' distance from each of these points. Some woodcutters, whom I had met on my way, left their bundles, took up their arms and joined my eight companions. Arriving at Ejbeh, we were 25.

In the evening, I sent 18 men to attack Arges, and when I arrived at the site of the battle shortly after, Awad Bey had already fled toward Tripoli.

I immediately marched on Bcharri to defeat Ragi Bey who, to avoid combat, entered the village and surrendered to the inhabitants. Leaving him in the custody of the notables, I left for Beit ed-Din with the desire to free my imprisoned companions. As I advanced, Maronites joined me, so that upon arriving at Ghosta, in the Kesrouan district, I had about 500 fighters.

The pasha's militia went to position itself at Ghazir in the vicinity of Ghosta, to my right, while a strong detachment of soldiers was already camped on my left at Jounieh.

Two days passed without any offensive movement taking place on either side. I then set out toward the Metn district, accompanied by a certain number of men from Kesrouan. On the way I met Mr. Kaz-Kalla-Khadra who, accompanied by a janissary from the French consulate general, gave me a letter from M. des Essarts urging me to avoid hostilities.

Hardly had I arrived in the Metn district when Emir Bechir-Assaf and some of his relatives, gathered at Bekfaya with various employees of Daoud Pasha, sent to announce that they had orders to forbid my passage. But I made them observe that they would be making a mistake in attacking me and would suffer the consequences. Whereupon they deemed it prudent not to engage in battle for the moment.

I continued to advance toward Bekfaya, and when I was only a short distance away, I stopped at Beit Chabab to write a response to M. des Essarts. For the hundredth time I protested that I sought justice and nothing but justice, declaring moreover that as testimony of my gratitude toward France I would submit to the desire of its representative. That very evening Daoud Pasha's militia arrived at the edge of Kesrouan, heading toward Bekfaya to join forces during the night with Emir Bechir-Assaf. But as I had gotten ahead of this militia and since the emir had evacuated the town the previous evening, I entered first.

Ten of my men, who were watching the passage of a valley between Kesrouan and Metn, were attacked at daybreak. At the moment when I was leaving Bekfaya to go to the site of the battle, a sheikh of the Khazen family came, galloping on his horse, to bring me a new letter from M. des Essarts, who begged me to avoid combat at any cost. A similar letter, the sheikh told me, was going to be delivered to Mr. Altap, chief of the pasha's militia, and the consul pledged his word that justice would finally be rendered to me.

I therefore ran to the ten engaged men, had all fighting cease, and, gathering the Maronites, passed into Kesrouan while the militia passed into Metn. Now, during this movement, the militia, crossing a hamlet, committed an execrable crime there. They killed a poor young girl, under the pretext that her parents had fought alongside my companions.

The next day, a new message from M. des Essarts invited me to an interview at Bekerke, at the Maronite Patriarch's residence. My soul was full of sorrow, and the inhabitants of Kesrouan and Metn, furious, spoke of avenging the murdered young girl. But I silenced both my pain and the people's just resentment and went to the requested interview.

The consul declared to me that M. Bourée, then ambassador in Constantinople, had received a letter that I had addressed to him asking him to designate a residence for me outside of Lebanon, and that, in the name of France, he offered me hospitality in Algiers.

"In my letter to M. Bourée," I said to M. des Essarts, "I had expressed the desire to spare the shedding of blood, but since then the pasha has hastened to make it flow more abundantly. All the Lebanese have protested in my favor, and my duties no longer allow me to leave my compatriots prey to the violence and injustices of my adversary."

In the presence of the Patriarch, the bishops, the principal Maronites and various employees of the Chancellery, the consul replied to me: "If you want to prove your friendship to France by accepting the hospitality she offers you in Algiers, the emperor grants you his particular protection; I speak to you in his name; he also grants French protection to all your companions and compatriots. Daoud Pasha will immediately release the prisoners, respect the Lebanese, your companions and your properties; in short, you will soon be rendered full justice. You have always shown your respect to France; well then! It must not be said that Daoud Pasha, who is the representative of the Sultan's authority, was driven from Lebanon."⁹

The French consul general invoked my friendship for France, spoke in the name of France, asked me for proof of devotion to France and offered me the honor of France's hospitality. What was I to do? This was a treaty that had all the diplomatic character and guaranteed respect for my dear companions and compatriots. This treaty had as witness an assembly of venerable personages; I accepted it.

I had to calm thousands of men who wanted to oppose my departure from Lebanon and wipe away, with my own hand, the tears of those who wept, assuring them that a French agent could not make light of the name of France and that of the Emperor. To demonstrate to the French nation my devotion and confidence, I therefore went to Beirut with M. des Essarts.



Upon my arrival in this city, the inhabitants gave me an enthusiastic welcome. The crowd followed me with acclamations that disturbed the governor of Syria as well as Daoud Pasha and forced them to hastily leave the city, one to go to Damascus, the other to Lebanon.

The consul general accepted with me a grand dinner given by Mr. Assad-Malhame, in honor of France, and there, he confirmed and amplified the solemn promises of the treaty concluded at Bekerke.

⁹ Daoud Pasha had, in fact, had to leave his residence at Beit ed-Din in Lebanon and, taking his treasures with him, had taken refuge in Beirut.

He put at my disposal a warship, *la Forbin*, whose commander and officers showered me with respect during the crossing from Beirut to Alexandria.



The commander, having then wanted to go to Cairo in the company of M. Outrey, then French consul general in Alexandria, I embarked on a Messageries Impériales packet boat which transported me to Marseille. There I was touched by the marks of sympathy that were lavished upon me both by several notables of the city and by a part of the population, but soon I left for Algiers.



The illustrious Marshal MacMahon, then governor of Algeria, honored me with his benevolence, and I received from the vice-governor, high officials, officers and French notables of this country, marks of sympathy that I do not forget.

However, I learned that Daoud Pasha had not released the prisoners¹⁰, that he was persecuting my companions as well as the managers of my properties, and that my harvests had been scattered. In Zgorta, he was also having the doors of my summer residence broken down, under the pretext of searching for a refugee. Finally, in agreement with M. des Essarts, he was spreading the rumor that the French government had interned me in Algiers.

I then wrote to M. de Moustier, Minister of Foreign Affairs; I asked for justice and was answered with threats. However, M. de MacMahon, taking interest in my fate, had the kindness to offer me a pension, but I declared to him that I had not come to seek money and that it would be more fitting to throw me in a dungeon if they did not want to grant me justice and the reclamation of a right placed under the protection of France and the Powers as well as under the sovereignty of the Sultan. Thanks to the loyal intervention of the Marshal, H.M. Napoleon III deigned to allow me to come to Paris, received me very graciously and renewed the offer of a pension, which, out of respect for the head of the French nation, I accepted, but only during my short stay in Paris.

I had only praise for Their Excellencies the ministers, who all, except for the Marquis de Moustier, received me with distinction. In the study that I was able to make to the end of the secret police's intrigues, as in the contact with powerful friends and powerful adversaries, I thought it wise to distance myself as much as possible from the former so as not to let anything of my own fate weigh upon them.



The misunderstanding between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and myself soon took an unfortunate turn; I felt that my personal liberty was at stake and I took the only means left to me to safeguard the honor of French hospitality: I abandoned France. Outside of France,

¹⁰ He only released them later, after ransoming them.

I could perish or suffer, without the nation to which my country had been so long and so strongly attached having the responsibility for my loss or my pain. We Orientals are made in such a way that hospitality makes a man sacred in our eyes, and there is no one in the West, I like to believe, who would refuse to understand that by sparing the French government the violation of this law of hospitality, I was paying homage to France.



Here now are some explanations and documents that show the necessity in which I found myself to leave France.

On March 5, 1868, M. Eugène Loudun officially communicated to me, on behalf of the Minister of the Interior (M. Pinard), the government's desire that I leave Paris and return to Algiers. I replied that if it was a simple desire of the government, I was ready to satisfy it, but that in going there, I wanted to pass through Rome and stay there for a few days; if on the contrary, it was an order, the government was stronger than I, but I would wait until I was taken by force. M. Loudun told me he would inform the government of all this and give me an answer the next day.

Six days later I had no news. I therefore addressed the following letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Paris, March 12, 1868.

To the Marquis de Moustier, Minister of Foreign Affairs

EXCELLENCY,

I have the honor to bring to your knowledge that having conceived the project of spending a few days in Rome, on the occasion of Holy Week solemnities, I plan to depart very soon.

I would believe myself failing in my duty, Mr. Minister, being the very grateful guest of the French government, if I did not hasten to inform you of this plan.

Please accept etc.

In place of the minister, M. Loudun replied to me thus, on the 14th:

Would you please take the trouble to come by my home today, from 5 to 6 o'clock, or from 7 to 8 o'clock. I have a communication to make to you - the Minister de Moustier has received a letter dated March 12.

I then wrote to M. Loudun that an indisposition prevented me from going to see him and that, given the probable importance of the communication, I asked him to come make it to me himself.

Disregarding the dignity of French hospitality as well as my merits vis-à-vis France and Christianity, or perhaps urged by M. de Moustier, who perhaps thought that by frightening me he could better cover up the injustices committed in Lebanon, M. Loudun had delivered to me, by a police agent, a note worded thus:

"I will not come to your home: that is impossible. If, on your side, you cannot come to my home, you may present yourself to the Chief of the Public Safety Division, M. Eriau, 26 Quai des Orfèvres. He will communicate to you:

- 1. Your letter to M. de Moustier, dated the 12th*
- 2. The letter from M. de Moustier to the Minister of the Interior, dated the 13th;*
- 3. The decisive response regarding you from the Minister of the Interior."*

I replied to M. Loudun to thank him for his frankness, and he almost immediately sent me this final letter:

"I confess to you, I deeply regret the course you are taking; I had hoped my letter would decide you to come see me, I wished to spare you the unpleasantness of an official refusal. I make this final approach with this aim. If your resolution is definitive, I have nothing left but to give notice of the failure of my efforts, and to urge you to go examine the documents, no later than Monday before noon.

Most cordially and sadly yours."

March 14, 1868

Thus warned, I had no information to seek. The laws of humanity seeming less known to M. de Moustier than to Daoud Pasha whom he himself had elected during his embassy in Constantinople, I left my retinue in Paris and went secretly to Brussels from where I addressed to M. de Moustier the following letter which was published in L'Indépendance Belge:

Brussels, March 24, 1868

EXCELLENCY,

Following a completely unofficial approach from the Minister of the Interior, inviting me to return to Algiers, I had the honor of bringing to your knowledge my project to go to Rome. Being then the guest of the French government, informing you of this plan seemed to me, Mr. Minister, a duty of gratitude.

The next day, an equally unofficial letter informed me of a communication from Your Excellency to the Minister of the Interior, and of decisive orders regarding me to the Chief of Public Safety Division. I was urged, moreover, to go to this official to learn of this decision, no later than Monday, March 10, before noon.

My liberty was thus threatened.

To prevent the French government from letting itself be led, by a deplorable appreciation of the facts, into an act little conforming to the customs of France and to the true expression of the French people's sentiments toward the Christians of Syria, I had to withdraw.

In wanting to take away from me, in Paris itself, the liberty which alone remains to me, you have acted, Excellency, not only against Joseph Karam but against the man who has never ceased to demand justice, against the Emperor's protégé, against the guest of France, against he who, to

please you, left his homeland when arms favored him, against he, finally, who had confidence in the word of your consul general.

No one is unaware, Excellency, that recent events had forced Daoud Pasha to take refuge in Beirut with his retinue, his baggage and his treasures. He used his last means of recovering Lebanon, by begging the consuls general of the Great Powers to assure me (which he had refused until then) liberty wherever I might choose to withdraw outside of Syria. The consuls declared, in a joint note, that they were ready to give their support to Daoud Pasha, to ensure my departure.

But hoping little in the success of this approach, he specially asked your consul to propose to me, before the Patriarch and several other personages, the conditions and offers that you know, Excellency, and that everyone knows. This treaty, completely omitted from the documents brought to light, where many things, moreover, are forgotten, was solemnly confirmed by M. Des Essarts in the name of the Emperor and France.

Thus, to satisfy your desire, I consented to let Daoud Pasha resume the government of Lebanon; to obtain your goodwill, I accepted hospitality in Algeria.

I was in Algiers itself, I was your guest and under your protection, when Daoud Pasha, violating the treaties, was holding the prisoners, ransoming them, breaking, without reason, the doors of my house in Zgorta, persecuting my companions, mistreating the managers of my properties, ruining the harvests, and continuing his arbitrary rule in all parts of Lebanon.

If Daoud Pasha, after accomplishing against the North of the mountain what his colleague Kourchoud Pasha, the instigator of the 1860 massacres, could not do, has not found his desires satisfied, how can they be satisfied?

If Daoud Pasha, free to act as he pleased and aided by the forces of Emin Pasha, Hassan Pasha and even the Serasker Derviche Pasha, has not succeeded in taking from me either life or liberty, it is his fault and not mine.

You rely, Excellency, on the dispatches written against me by some of your agents in Syria; permit me to tell you, in turn, that the interest of these gentlemen, very little favorable to the Christian world, beginning with France, has left you ignorant of the truth.

It suffices for me, Excellency, to be able to affirm, from a just appreciation of the facts, that, until this day, I have served French influence, like all my fathers; it suffices for me to have found in France very numerous sympathies and the keen desire to see justice and right triumph in the Orient. But I must regret the situation that has been made for me, the evils that succeed one another in my homeland, and their consequences.

Please accept etc.



I dare hope that the current French government will appreciate, as befits its dignity, the facts that engage this dignity itself, and that it will not find it useless to know the motives that led MM. de Bentivoglio, Outrey, des Essarts and Bourée to support, with such relentlessness, the persecutors of Eastern Christians. This government, free and enlightened,

will find in this investigation proof that almost all of France's benefits abroad have been distorted by its agents and that French influence in the East has encountered only them as an obstacle.



The governments and nations to whom I address myself are enlightened about the facts that my adversaries have sought to distort. My destruction could not be achieved. I still live and my sufferings have at least had the advantage of removing me from the caprice of certain men.



I must add that while in Corfu, I desired to speak with the German Minister to the King of Greece about matters that had no connection to the war then ongoing between France and Germany. This minister had come from Athens; I went to the Chancellery but did not meet him. Two days later, Dervish Effendi, the Ottoman consul, claimed to have heard from the aforementioned minister that I had offered my services to Germany against France. Although the French consul in Corfu had shown me little goodwill, I went to see this consul, informed him of the purpose of my visit to the German minister, and added - "The lack of loyalty of some French agents could not alter my sympathies nor make me forget my duties toward France. Moreover, it is not my place to offer my services to one Power against another Power of Europe."

Moreover, to prove my statement, I accepted an invitation from the Russian Consul General to a ball where agents of various European States were present, and there, in the presence of the Italian Consul General, Madame Dervish Effendi and other persons, I addressed the German Minister and expressed my joy at the opportunity to see him for the first time. The minister said to me:

- "The Turkish nation is the first civilized nation in the world; while it dominated Spain, it founded civilization in Europe."

- "I am grateful to Your Excellency for your intention," I replied, "but you will permit me to remind you that the Muslims who dominated Spain were from the Arab nation."



Recently, Mr. Ghanem, dragoman at the French consulate in Beirut, presented himself to the Maronite Patriarch, saying that Mr. de Vogué, French Ambassador to Constantinople, did not desire my return to Lebanon without the Ottoman government's consent, fearing it might lead to unrest, and that he asked His Grace to express his opinion on this matter. The Patriarch reportedly answered that he shared the ambassador's desire. However, it is well known that I myself have been requesting this consent for five years, and that to obtain it, I have always asked for a regular trial or the recognition of my innocence and civil liberty.

Now, to avoid granting me this trial, they add today that the Patriarch wants, purely and simply, for me to remain abroad. But I observe that if His Grace has the slightest criticism

to oppose me, it is appropriate to declare it; for, just as His Grace's will cannot dismiss Franco Pasha, neither could it veil the injustices that this pasha has committed while using the Patriarch's own name, as the Lebanese generally attest.

Furthermore, I add that while Daoud Pasha could neither use me and the Maronites when he tried to confiscate Church properties, nor implement the prohibition given to the Patriarch against building new temples without his permission, Franco Pasha, more skillful, has managed to violate the Law of Nations, under the shadow of the Patriarchate, in order to create division between the Maronites and their first Pastor.

Then, as Monsignor Moussa, Bishop of Tripoli, would desire, contrary to Rome's orders and the diocese's wishes, that his nephew succeed him to the see of Tripoli, Franco Pasha specially supports the bishop, uses him for politics and thus stimulates between the clergy and the people a dispute whose dangers cannot be concealed.



I have also learned that the German Consul General in Beirut, having made an excursion to the cedars of Lebanon and having visited my nephew, as he had visited the Patriarch, Franco Pasha hastened to attribute to me a secret understanding with this consular figure and uses this pretext to push Kourchoud Pasha's famous committee to make a request demanding the extension of my stay abroad. I declare, on my honor, that there is no understanding between any Power and myself, and I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the German Consul General for having kindly visited one of my family members.

All the tribes of Syria attest that on several occasions the German Consul General has supported the Law of Nations and I consider myself honored to enjoy his sympathy. But is Franco Pasha authorized to speak and do evil because others love good?



Franco Pasha has insinuated and even declared that my return to Lebanon would cause troubles that would serve one political influence rather than another, and that, to avoid these troubles, I should accept whatever treatment the government would be pleased to grant me, and remain abroad. However, if unfortunately, these influences were to become divided regarding Lebanon's rights, then, whether I was in my homeland or not, my compatriots would adhere to the policy most consistent with these rights. But, I hold it certain that the dignity of the five great protecting Powers will not allow anyone to reduce us to absolute servitude by inventing new pretexts at every moment; and I add that if anyone dared deny the respect I maintain for France, it would be a temerity against which my entire life protests. As for the troubles, they could occur, I agree, because it depends on Franco Pasha to provoke them.



Now, if Franco Pasha has notoriously been able to reduce the constitution to nothing; if his officials can throw the Lebanese in prison without a regular trial or ruin them through garnishees imposed without declared motives; in short, if the Lebanese are deprived of the freedom to make their complaints heard; if finally, arbitrary rule reigns as master in Lebanon, and if, nevertheless, the agent of a Power could have been misled, or even a Patriarch deceived, one will agree that this is only one more reason for the Powers, who have abolished servitude, to save the victims of such a grave confusion of rights.



One might also ask why Daoud Pasha, of whom I have spoken so much above, attacked me unexpectedly, surrounded me with troops, caused me such serious damages, and contested my life for thirteen months; why, finally, I am still being pursued today, without ever having been able to obtain a regular trial. I have the honor to respond that it is solely because I have always paid homage to the dignity of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan and to that of the five great Powers, by requesting that the pasha put into practice the constitution given by the Sultan and these same Powers to Lebanon.



From the beginning of Islam until 1860, the Lebanese were able to maintain their autonomy and if, in 1860, they submitted to the new constitution, it was to prove their confidence in the protectorate of the five great Powers. By abolishing this constitution to make himself absolute master, the pasha, supposedly Christian, ceases to be a regular governor while showing disrespect to His Majesty the Sultan and the Powers.



I was saying, just now, that Lebanon, divided, could not defend itself. But division equally harms the influence of the Powers, because each of the tribes can no longer serve the influence of the Power that specifically protects it, nor safeguard itself against the dangers that threaten all tribes simultaneously. Now, since the five Powers have an equal official right to protect Lebanon, their political dignity requires that they protect each tribe equally; thus ensuring for the unfortunate province a loyal and peaceful situation, and preserving the Christianity of the Holy Land.

After having endured for five years a painful stay abroad, without being able to obtain justice, I finally tell the nations the truth about the facts and I ask the five great Powers whose names appear in the constitution to take in their hands the cause of Lebanon and mine, to judge us according to their conscience and dignity, and to compensate us for the losses arbitrarily caused by Muslim and Christian pashas. I also hope that no just government will want to deprive me of its goodwill if, after such long suffering, I express the desire to return to my homeland to either live or lose my life under the banner of the Law of Nations.

IV

APPEAL TO THE DIGNITY OF GOVERNMENTS AND NATIONS

Lebanon, being a small autonomous Christian principality isolated in the midst of vast and numerous provinces of Asia, has suffered persecutions throughout time, but has always been able to maintain, as we have just mentioned, something dear to it that it will always claim its autonomy.

This autonomy was altered in 1860. Lebanon became both an eastern and western province, such that political dissensions multiplied there, and morally it resembles a ship battered by waves and storms.

That is why I appeal to the dignity that governments and nations have a duty to maintain in the political order - dignity that is founded on the well-understood interests of weak peoples and not their ruin. I hope moreover that the government will appreciate the loyalty and sincerity of this appeal while allowing me to defend the rights of my homeland against policies aimed at accomplishing its ruin.

After causing religious war by dividing the principality of Lebanon into two kaimakamats, Christian and Druze, and thereby bringing about the massacres of 1860, the employees of the Porte accused the Lebanese of forming coalitions based on their various beliefs, while they themselves continued to foment religious dissension, subdivide Christian tribes, and finally invite different clergy, known to be the pivot of any religion, to intervene in official affairs.

These employees had in mind:

- 1° To divide, through Lebanon's internal dissensions, the Powers that protect it;
- 2° To compromise the clergy by mixing them in politics, and consequently make them odious to the populations;
- 3° To remove from Lebanon the possibility of uniting and defending itself, in order to crush it at a time when Europe, too occupied with its own affairs, would not be free to intervene.

It must be considered, moreover, that in giving such an upset Lebanon a foreign governor, the Constantinople cabinet thereby obliged this governor to rely solely on brutal military force, to bear down with his hand on all points at once, and that he was bound to find in each tribe men ready to contribute to the ruin of their homeland, just as Korchid Pasha himself had been able to find them.

To justify their arbitrary rule, the Porte's agents constantly recall the emigration of the Circassians and the misfortunes of Poland; but the Circassians were offensive warriors whom Russia gave the choice of residing in colonies or leaving the empire, and it was then that the Ottoman government, having welcomed them, enrolled their young men in its army. As for the Poles, the Russian government suppressed their uprising. But the Christians of Lebanon

and Syria were massacred by the pashas because they are not warriors, and out of spite for the Hatti-Humayun which had been granted to them at the request of the Powers.



Moreover, the same dignity, a necessary and moral condition of any strong power, demands from His Imperial Majesty Abdul Aziz and the five great Powers the recognition of Lebanon's autonomy, for seven reasons:

1° The misfortunes of this principality erupted following the Hatti-Humayun.

2° Korchid Pasha, an employee of the Sublime Porte, deceived the consuls general by persuading them to arrest me and the Christians at Bekfaya in order to deliver Zahle and Deir-El-Kamar to the soldiers and Druzes, who, without the soldiers, would not have dared approach Zahle nor commit the massacres of Deir-El-Kamar and elsewhere.

3° The new constitution is inherently deceptive, as it names the governor of Lebanon “mutasarraf” (absolute) and consequently gives this governor the power to abolish the constitution itself, as well as to violate the Law of Nations, as attested not only by the word of the Lebanese but by the facts of which I have given only a brief summary.

4° The “mutasarraf” pashas, while claiming to be Christian, have accomplished in the shadow of the Sultan's name and the five great Powers what Korchid had not been able to do.

5° Lebanon is the refuge of Christians from Syria in times of persecution and can often protect populations against the massacres that the pashas renew with a kind of periodicity.

6° The dignity of the Sultan and the five great Powers can neither desire nor permit the subjugation of the oppressed, whoever they may be, to the absolute will of their oppressors.

7° Finally, Lebanon's autonomous condition is an official right recognized since time immemorial, and the dignity of the Sultan and the five great Powers cannot tolerate either the abolition of this privilege or the prolongation of a situation that fatally necessitates the ruin of their protégés at a given time.

It is therefore on these grounds that I base my appeal, I repeat, to the dignity of H.M. the Sultan our Sovereign, and the five protecting Powers, in order to obtain for Lebanon its original autonomy.

V

APPEAL TO THE LAW OF NATIONS

I appeal to the Law of Nations because it is the sacred foundation of all social order. By virtue of this Law, each person owes regular submission to its government, and the government owes them justice. By virtue of this same Law, each autonomous province forms a people, which exercises the authority granted to it by the conditions of autonomy.

Now, the autonomy granted to the Lebanese leaves them free in matters concerning their internal organization and the choice of their prince. Their only duties are to submit the nomination of this prince for the Sultan's confirmation and to pay a fixed tribute.

In 1860, the government of the Sublime Porte wanted to transfer to the five great Powers its right to confirm the governor of Lebanon and share with them the Lebanese's own right to choose this governor and give themselves an organization or constitution. This was to miss the goal, and to appropriate the sharing of these rights instead of guaranteeing their exercise to the protégés.

I believe I should point out:

1° That a government which wants to share between itself and other governments the autonomy of any province and spend considerable sums to lead this province to ruin, thereby attests that its design is radically fatal. Justice forbids this government from executing its design, and the Law of Nations requires other governments to recognize the same autonomy.

2° That the law of the empire forbids the parricide from inheriting his father's property, and, consequently, that the loyalty of H.M. the Sultan and the five great Powers cannot permit the pashas either to bend under their arbitrary rule and absolutism the widows and orphans of the victims they have massacred, or to take away from all Lebanese the freedom of speech in order to sacrifice them, in silence, in the shadow of the imperial throne and under the eyes of the five great Powers that protect them.

3° That if Lebanon were not an autonomous principality recognized since time immemorial, the blood with which the pashas have watered it, and the servitude they impose on its inhabitants, would create for these inhabitants a right to this autonomy whose necessity would be superabundantly demonstrated.

It is therefore on these considerations that I base my appeal, I repeat, to the Law of Nations, which is sacred in the social order, and safeguards, along with the Law of God itself, human dignity; and I do not doubt the support of H.M. the Sultan and the Powers as well as the cooperation of all civilized nations.

VI

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE FUTURE OF THE ORIENT

No man of good sense can deny that natural law is the fundamental law of humankind, a law that constitutes the Law of Nations. History demonstrates that nations that respect this Law prosper, while those that violate it fall, sooner or later, into decline.

Thus, we have seen the Empire of Islam prosper when it respected the various autonomies united within it, and decline when, subsequently, it wanted to violate these same autonomies.



The Orient, cradle of all peoples, situated between Europe and the Indies, must possess an integrity recognized as necessary both for the peace of Europe and for the prosperity of Oriental peoples. However, this integrity can never exist except by taking as its foundation the dignity of these same populations, and it is known that dignity is found in the observance of law, which, in turn, can have no solid foundation except by relying on the Law of Nations.

Naturally, the government of the Sublime Porte would undoubtedly desire to safeguard the integrity of the empire, but unfortunately, it happens that the pashas and kaymakams, sent to the provinces, notoriously violate the laws confirmed by the Sultan himself, display towards their compatriots a contempt that could be a bad example for the agents of the Powers, capriciously use the imperial army to ruin H.I.M.'s own subjects, and yet do not fear to veil all these evils under the pretension of an absolute power of which they claim to be the representatives, while they thus lose the remaining integrity of the same empire.

Such procedures brought down the Ottoman empire when it was at the height of its power; it is therefore impossible that their continuation could raise it up today. Europe views this state with pain, but, as each Power would like to remedy it according to its own politics, the Eastern Question has become a source of difficulties for Europe itself.



What then is to be done? - If the high Ottoman officials cannot find in the Orient men capable of reconstituting the integrity of the empire on solid and lasting foundations, they could undoubtedly seek in Europe persons capable of such a work with loyalty. But if their policy will not admit the recognition of the Law of Nations, either through Oriental or European means, are we not led to see in this a proof that this same policy is harmful to the integrity of the empire, to the prosperity of the Orient, and consequently to the tranquility of Europe regarding the burning Eastern Question? And yet the triumph of H.I.M. the

Sultan, the progress of the empire, and the general good should, it seems, appear preferable to poor private interests!



What then is to be done? - If the high Ottoman officials cannot find in the Orient men capable of reconstituting the integrity of the empire on solid and lasting foundations, they could undoubtedly seek in Europe persons capable of such a work with loyalty. But if their policy will not admit the recognition of the Law of Nations, either through Oriental or European means, are we not led to see in this a proof that this same policy is harmful to the integrity of the empire, to the prosperity of the Orient, and consequently to the tranquility of Europe regarding the burning Eastern Question? And yet the triumph of H.I.M. the Sultan, the progress of the empire, and the general good should, it seems, appear preferable to poor private interests!



Now allow me two words in conclusion. Since the 11th century, many expeditions have been directed from Europe toward the Orient, where they had populations extending their arms to them. And yet Europe has never known how to take advantage of this possible cooperation, because of political divergences that soon arose between the Powers. And it will always be thus in the future, for the only foundation on which one can base an agreement between diverse races and a general development of humanity is the Law of Nations, produced, as I said above, from natural law, which every man believing in God is bound to respect because he considers it a divine work, as well as he who does not believe in God, because it regulates and harmonizes social relations.

If we were fortunate enough that governments would want to call all men to know and practice this natural law and this Law of Nations, the moral effects of the law and Right would be exchanged between nations like the benefits of light between the sun and the stars spread through space. Even if the circumstances in which governments find themselves placed today do not permit them a general understanding in this regard, they would have, it seems to me, a great interest in forming, assisting, and developing a Society of men of good will¹¹ who, without distinction of homeland or language, would dedicate themselves to the care of enlightening, in the Orient, the peoples on the necessity of returning to the knowledge and practice of this law and this right, assured pledges of all order, all morality and all social well-being. The government of the Sublime Porte especially would derive considerable advantages for the integrity of the empire and for the prosperity of the Orient.

Finally, I recommend this project, which can deceive no one and alarm no authority, to men who love justice and I would be happy to work with them toward the realization of so noble a design.



¹¹ I intend to publish a brochure on this subject.

H.I.M. the Sultan has always manifested a high sense of justice; I hope that, following the same justice, H.H. the Grand Vizier and the current high officials along with all the official world will appreciate, according to the elevation of their noble sentiments, the arguments that I have just developed.

